He expected to win a decisive tactical victory over the left wing of the enemy that afternoon; if he had done this, as was of course possible, he might have pushed on the next day; but if he had not been entirely successful, he must have found himself in a false position, and probably early the next morning, he would have retired across the stream.[1]

3. General McDowell's tactics have been decried, but, as it seems to us, without good reason. General Johnston says:[2] "If the tactics of the Federals had been equal to their strategy, we should have been beaten. If, instead of being brought into action in detail, their troops had been formed in two lines with a proper reserve, and had assailed Bee and Jackson in that order, the two Southern brigades must have been swept from the field in a few minutes, or enveloped. General McDowell would have made such a formation, probably, had he not greatly underestimated the strength of his enemy."

General McDowell would beyond a doubt have made such a formation had he been able to do so. But in the then condition of his army,—five of his seven brigades having been on their feet for twelve hours and very much exhausted,[8]—and all being raw troops, the thing was not practicable. He did wisely in losing no time over such an impossible

problem,
and in doing Ins best at once to snatch the victory
by a bold and unhesitating advance. There was,

[1] See the remarks of General Beauregard, *1* B. & L., 218.
[9] Johnston's *JVarıativı*, 57.
[3] On the exhaustion of the men in Hunter and I leintzelman's divisions, seethe Reports of Colonels Farnsworth, Howard, Dunnell, 2 W. K.. 413, 418, 421, etc.